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New Report Shows Significant Potential
For Smart Grid Technology to Address Maryland's Energy Challenges

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) has released a report evaluating potential Smart Grid technologies, policies, regulatory issues, costs, and benefits. Results of preliminary analysis suggest that implementing Smart Grid technologies and strategies could reduce consumer's electricity bills, improve system reliability, lower utilities' operational costs, and create new jobs. MEA's report reflects research and analysis conducted by government and research agencies, utilities, national laboratories, technology companies, and non-government organizations.

"We must continue to fight every fight when it comes to addressing our State's energy challenges," remarked Governor Martin O'Malley. "These findings support the continued research and development of Smart Grid, Smart Meters and Smart Pricing, which will help empower consumers to reduce their consumption and their bills."

The O'Malley- Brown Administration is committed to putting Maryland families first with aggressive, yet attainable energy policy reform and has paved the way for the State's advancements in Smart Grid research to date. Most notably, the EmPOWER Maryland legislation, which calls for a 15% reduction in energy usage state-wide by 2015, and Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard of 20% renewable energy usage by 2022, have made Maryland a national leader in energy policy. Today's Smart Grid research is one more step towards a Smart, Green and Growing Maryland.

A Smart Grid system would allow for two-way communication from the power lines to homes or businesses in order to help consumer's better manage their electricity consumption. The communication link for the Smart Grid is through the deployment of a "Smart Meter." Smart Meters provide consumers with information to help them lower their electric bills by, for example, choosing to run their dishwasher or clothes dryer when energy is least expensive. Pilot programs have shown that this can reduce consumers' bills by as much as 15%.

The MEA report was funded through a nationally competitive Department of Energy (DOE) grant which was awarded in September 2008. MEA's grant partners include Energetics Incorporated, the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE), and R.W. Beck, Inc.

"The literature review findings announced today confirm the potential for Smart Grid technology in Maryland and point towards Smart Grid technology as part of our energy solutions," noted Director Malcolm Woolf. "Maryland has been recognized as a leader in clean energy and energy efficiency, and we are committed to using this information and our continued research as a spring board to make it easier for consumers to reduce their electricity bills."

For more information on Smart Grid advancements in Maryland and for a downloadable version of the literature review released today, go to www.Energy.Maryland.Gov or www.smartgridmd.org

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